Department of Commerce

[Washington, DC]

1931

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

BUREAU OF FOREIGN AND DOMESTIC COMMERCE

WASHINGTON

April 27, 1931.

To: H. H. Belote, Curator of History,
Smithsonian Institution.

IN REPLY REFER TO 39i

From: J. A. G. Pennington.

Attached herewith is a list of the metal currencies for which we lack details, such as diameter, thickness and weight. Any assistance you can give us in securing these missing measurements will be very much appreciated.

J. A. G. Pennington

J. A. G. Pennington,
Specialties Division.

Inclosure 92351.

INCLOSURE 92351

FROM

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

BUREAU OF FOREIGN AND DOMESTIC COMMERCE

Form 9 11—3855

GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE

List of Metal Currencies
for which
Diameter, Thickness and Weight Measures are Requested. also alloy

HEDJAZ - Saoudi dollar and subdivisions

NEJD - Riyals and subdivisions

YEMEN - Maria Theresa dollar

ITALIAN SOMALILAND - Italian "Rupia".

OMAN - Native coins

PALESTINE - Thickness of coins only.

IRAQ - New Dinar and subsidiary coins

PERSIA - "Dinar " " "

TIMOR (Portuguese) Local coins, if any

AFGHANISTAN - Native coins

INDO-CHINA - Local currency

SIAM - Native coins

TIBET - " "

NEPAL - " "

GOA (India) - Rupia and subsidiary coins

BELGIAN CONGO - Coins differing from Belgian coins

PORTUGUESE EAST AFRICA - Local currency

MADAGASCAR - If coins are different from French

BRITISH EAST AFRICA - Silver shilling and cents coins

Siam. How much of the previous coins are in circulation I do not know.

Tibet has no recent information I think the coins vary as to the borders such as Chinese Indian etc

Nepal no recent information

Goa. Our latest coins are dated 1903 and 1904 supposed to be the same as the British Indian. We have 1. 1/2 1/4 1/8 Rupia in silver Bronze 1/2 1/4 1/8 1/12 Tanga corresponding with the 1/2 1/4 anna 1/2 pice & 1/12 anna of British India.

Belgian Congo Before the war the silver coins were 5 2 1 fcs 50 centimes. In nickel 20 10 & 5 centimes with holes.
since the war we have
nickel 1 franc 50 centimes 25 & 24 centimes without holes
& nickel 20 10 & 5 centimes with holes.
Any modern mint report should give you these.

Portuguese East Africa no local coins.
In 1888 & 1895 foreign silver coins were countersteamped with crowned P.M. or P.M.

Madagascar, only French coins

British East Africa -
See British Mint Report for 1920-1 published
in 1922 Page 15

Have only rubbing of the Saoudi dollar of Hedjaz & ~~Nejd~~ Nejd. Size 36 mm date 1346 AH

The dollar of Ali ibn Hussein of the Hedjaz dated 1334 AH is 36 mm. 2.5 mm thick. weight of one specimen is 24.89

Ibn Saoud's nickel coins of the Nejd & Hedjaz are 1 grush or piastre 26 mm 1.75 mm thick Wt. 6.45

1/2 " " 23 1.75 " " 5.54

1/4 " " 20 mm 1.75 " " 4.17

I do not know if these are the riyals you refer to or not

Maria Theresa dollars made from 1780 to date H weighted. averaged 28.04 gr one ~~weighted~~ in 1926 28.90, size varies 40.5 41. thickness 2 to 2.5 mm

Italian Somaliland W do not have the rupia only the half

Muscat & Oman

all coins seen are copper struck between 1311-1315
1893-97. and are 1/4 annas. 25 to 25.5 mm
average thickness ~~from~~ about 1½ mm - av weight.
5.68 gram

Palestine thickness 100 mils 2 mm
50 1½ mm
20 2
10 1.75
5 1.5
2 1.75
1 1.25

Iraq do not have.

Persia all of their silver & minor coins are marked in dinars
the dollar size silver is marked 5000 dinars
their 2 nickel coins are marked 50
and 100 dinars.

Timor no local coins

Afghanistan, all sorts of coins seem to circulate
the most recent ones are all of the time of Amanulla

Gold 2	?	24 mm	1½ m thick	9.16
1	Amani	23 mm	1 "	6.00
½		18	75 mm	

Afghanistan. silver 2½ Afghani 38 mm 2 mm thick wt 24.85
as ans is worth it probably meant for 21 gr.

1 Afghani 29.5 mm 1.25 thick wt 9.96 (probably fake)
½ " 24.5 mm 1 mm average under 5 gms
all look more base than the larger coins

1 Rupee. 27 mm 2 mm thick wt 10 gm
½ " 21 1.75 " 4.679 gm
looks more base than the rupee

Rupee of 1347 the usurper Bacho Sacho 24.5 2.25 thick weights 9.2
We have many copper & brass pieces of various sizes & weights
The most recent are dated 1304 new style = 1926
and are. copper
10 Puls 24 mm 1.5 mm thick 6 gms
5 21.5 mm 1. " " 3 gms
2 18 mm .75 mm " 2 gms.

Indo China. This can be gotten from the French mint reports. I do not know if any of the brass & pewter cash of annam circulate there today.

Siam Latest information we have is from the Swiss Banking Corp. Journal Aug 15 1928.
Silver 1 Baht, 50 satangs, 25 satangs. nickel 10, 5 satangs Bronze 1 satang. Banknotes 1000 100 20
10 5 1 Baht.
.1 Baht = .66567 grams fine gold
Can give you sizes & weights if desired.

June 17, 1931.

Mr. J. A. G. Pennington,
Specialties Division
Department of Commerce
Washington, D. C.

File: 391
Enclosure 92351

Dear Sir:

I offer my apology for the delay in answering your letter of April 27th, which was turned over to me by Mr. Belote. The fact of the matter is I have been extremely busy with a lot of editorial work that could not be delayed. I am afraid I cannot give you complete help on the questions you ask. We do not have any fine gage to give the absolute thickness of coins and we cannot tell you the exact alloy of the coins.

Concerning the Saoudi dollar, we have only a rubbing of this. The piece is 36 mm. We have an earlier dollar struck for the former King of Hedjaz dated 1334 A. H. It is 36 mm. 2.5 mm. thick and the weight of our specimen is 24.89 gm., probably intended for 25 gm.

Under "Nejd" you have Riyals and subdivisions. All we have are the nickel coins struck for Ibn Saoud of the Nejd and Hedhaz. Their denominations in Arabic are:

1 grush(known in English as a piastre)	26mm.	1.75 mm.	Thick	Weight	6.45 gm.
½ " " " "	23mm.	1.75 mm.	"	"	5.54 "
¼ " " " "	20mm.	1.75 mm.	"	"	4.17 "

YEMEN - Maria Theresa dollars made from 1780 to date. Four were weighed - averaged 28.04 gr. One struck in 1926 weighs 28.90. The size varies 40. - 40.5 - 41. Thickness 2 to 2.5 mm.

ITALIAN SOMALILAND - We do not have the "Rupia" but only the Half Rupia.

MUSCAT AND OMAN - All coins seen are copper, struck between 1311 - 1315 A. H. = 1893 - 1897, and are 1/4 annas. 25 to 25.5 mm. Average thickness about 1½ mm. Average weight 5.68 gm. There is also a rare 1/12 anna made only in 1893.

- 2 - Continued -

PALESTINE - Thickness 100 mils 2mm.
50 " 1½ "
20 2 "
10 1.75 mm.
5 1.5 "
2 1.75 "
1 1.25 "

IRAQ - We not have.

PERSIA - All of their silver and minor coins are marked in dinars. The dollar size silver is marked 5000 dinars. Their 2 nickel coins are marked 50 and 100 dinars.

TIMOR - No local coins.

AFGHANISTAN- All sorts of coins seem to circulate. The more recent ones, all of the time of Amannua, are:

Gold	2 ?	24 mm.	1½ mm. thick	9.16 gm. weight	
	1 Amani	23 "	1 " "	6.00 "	"
	½ "	18 "	75 " "	3.00 "	"
Silver	2 Afghani	38mm.	2 mm. thick	24.85 "	(as ours is worn it probably was meant for 25 gr.)
	1 "	29.5mm.	1.25mm. "	9.96 "	(probably for 10gr.)
	½ "	24.5"	1. " "	Average under 5 gm.	

All look more base than the larger coins.

1 Rupee	27mm.	2 mm. thick	10 gm. weight	
½ "	21 "	1.75" "	4.67 gm. "	(Looks more base than the Rupee)

Rupee of 1347 the usurper Bacho Sache 24.5, 2.25 thick and weighs 9.2 gm. We have many copper and brass pieces of various sizes and weights. The most recent are dated 1304 new style = 1926 and are as follows:

Copper	10 Puls	24 mm.	1.5 mm. thick	6 gm. weight
"	5 "	21.5 "	1. " "	3 gm. "
"	2 "	18. "	.75" "	2 gm. "

INDO-CHINA - This can be obtained from the French Mint Reports. I do not know if any of the brass and pewter cash of annam circulates there today.

SIAM - Latest information we have is from the Swiss Banking Corp. Journal August 15, 1928.

Silver 1 Baht, 50 Satangs, 25 Satangs.
Nickel 10 Satangs, 5 Satangs.
Bronze 1 Satang.
Banknotes 1000, 100, 20, 10, 5, 1 Baht.

1 Baht = .66567 grams fine gold. We can give you sizes and weights if desired.

How much of the previous coins are in circulation I do not know.

TIBET - We have no recent information. I think the coins used vary as to the borders such as Chinese, Indian etc.

-c o n t i n u e d -

NEPAL - No recent information.

GOA - Our latest coins are dated 1903 and 1904 and supposed to be the same as the British Indian coins. We have 1, ½, ¼, 1/8 Rupia in silver and ¼, ⅛, 1/8, 1/12 Tanga in bronze, corresponding to the ¼, ⅛ anna ½ pice and 1/12 anna of British India.

BELGIAN CONGO- Before the war the silver coins were 5,2,1 francs and 50 centimes. In nickel 20, 10 and 5 centimes with holes.

Since the war we have in nickel 1 franc, 50 centimes; 20 and 24 centimes without holes and 20, 10 and 5 centimes with holes. Any modern mint report should give you these.

PORTUGUESE EAST AFRICA - No local coins. In 1888 and 1895 foreign silver coins were counter stamped with crowned P. M. or PM.

MADAGASCAR - Only French coins.

BRITISH EAST AFRICA - See British Mint Report for 1920 - 1, published in 1923, page 15.

Very truly yours,

HW:JG CURATOR

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

BUREAU OF FOREIGN AND DOMESTIC COMMERCE

WASHINGTON

June 25, 1931.

Mr. Howland Wood, Curator,
The American Numismatic Society,
Broadway, Between 155th & 156th Streets,
New York, N. Y.

IN REPLY REFER TO 39i

Subject: Metal and paper currencies of Africa and Asia.

Dear Mr. Wood:

Please accept my thanks for the very helpful currency information contained in your letter of June 17, addressed to Mr. Pennington of this division.

With the coin details you have so kindly furnished us, it will be possible to complete our reports on the currencies of certain African and Asiatic countries.

I note from your letter that you have no recent information on the currency of Tibet. The American Consul at Hankow, China, has just sent in a very interesting report on Tibetan currency and I shall be very glad to loan you this report if you should wish to read it.

Very truly yours,

Eric T. King

Eric T. King,
Chief, Specialties Division.

June 27, 1931.

Mr. Eric T. King,
Chief, Specialties Division
Department of Commerce
Washington, D. C.

File: 391

Dear Sir:

In reply to your letter of June 25th, we would be glad to have what information you have concerning the currency of Tibet and will see that you get the original back promptly. We would be very glad to have you send any further reports that you may issue concerning currency. Up to date, we have received only that publication about Europe but understand the Department of Commerce has issued one or more reports on other localities.

Very truly yours,

HW:JG

CURATOR

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

BUREAU OF FOREIGN AND DOMESTIC COMMERCE

WASHINGTON

July 1, 1931.

Mr. Howland Wood, Curator,
The American Numismatic Society,
Broadway, between 155th and 156th Sts.,
New York, N. Y.

IN REPLY REFER TO 39i

Dear Mr. Wood:

In reply to your letter of June 27, I take pleasure in sending you the inclosed report concerning the currency of Tibet, which, I believe, you will find interesting reading.

Besides the European currency pamphlet we have published one dealing with Australia, New Zealand, East Indiea and Pacific Islands. I inclose a copy of this later compilation and am placing your name on our mailing list to receive subsequent metal and paper currency publications, as issued.

Very truly yours,

Eric T. King,
Chief, Specialties Division.

Inclosure 39493.

Please return the consular report (No. 21188) within ten days.

July 3, 1931.

Department of Commerce
Washington, D. C.

Attention: Eric T. King

Gentlemen:

I beg to thank you for the pamphlet on Metal and Paper Currencies of Austral Asia etc., also the Consular report 21188, which you so kindly sent to me. I have copied those parts not in Walsh, which we already have, and I am herewith returning this report to you. Again thanking you, I remain

Very truly yours,

HW:JG

CURATOR